

# Engineering Heritage Australia Bulletin: #7

## 16 September 2021

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### Portable buildings – world heritage nomination

Portable buildings were imported in large numbers to Australia during the nineteenth century. They were made not merely of timber and iron, but of oilcloth, slate, zinc, papier mache, and 'portable brick'. More survive in Australia than anywhere else. They range through iron lighthouses, cottages of 'teak' from Singapore, German glazed conservatories, plate iron fronted buildings from Glasgow, and redwood houses from California. Many are of the greatest technical interest, and few cases survive in the country of origin.

For these reasons it has been proposed that they be nominated as a group for World Heritage Listing - *adapted from an advertisement for a presentation by Emeritus Professor Miles Lewis of the University of Melbourne, a member of the Portable Buildings World Heritage Nomination Task Force.*

The taskforce of eminent heritage professionals, is proposing 104 portable buildings in Australia be placed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The attached piece, PortableBuildings\_WorldHeritageNomination mainly deals with the survivors in NSW.

Two instances of imported cast iron buildings in Sydney that are not mentioned, are the iron church – long demolished, and the cast iron columns and girders for the Sydney mint's coining factory – now restored and adapted as the headquarters of Sydney Living Museums.



## Engineering technology

Thanks to Doug Boleyn for the following reference: A number of engineering societies have got together to build a searchable history of engineering technology developments in the 'Wiki' form.

It is available at [https://ethw.org/Main\\_Page](https://ethw.org/Main_Page).

## Heritage NSW, Digital Heritage Library

Ken McInnes and Margret Doring have drawn attention to the Heritage NSW, Digital Heritage Library at <https://heritagensw.intersearch.com.au/heritagenswjspui/simple-search>

The site contains about 10,500 useful reports, books and guides, covering not only NSW, but other states, many National reports, as well as many useful overseas reports and guides.

## Links to webinars & videos

The provision of advice about the following links to webinars and videos by Margret Doring and Ken McInnes, is gratefully acknowledged.

- **Construction History Society of America** (Ken McInnes)  
The Construction History Society of America and its webinars are recorded online. The links are available via the website <https://www.constructionhistorysociety.org/> and then by selecting from the 'drop-down' menu, to find webinars such as <https://www.constructionhistorysociety.org/webinar-metals-through-time>
- **Institution of Civil Engineers** (Margret Doring)  
advises that the ICE Events archive webpage <https://www.ice.org.uk/eventarchive?disciplines=377>, enables access to its webinars on a wide range of disciplines.  
  
A recent one held by ICE's PHEW (Panel for Historical Engineering Works) on 18 June, was by Stephen K. Jones, Wales Member of PHEW, and Chief Executive of the South Wales Institute of Engineers Educational Trust, was about Brunel in South Wales - <https://www.ice.org.uk/events/brunel-in-wales-part-2-webinar>
- **Society for Industrial Archeology** (Margret Doring)  
Society for Industrial Archeology [SIA YouTube channel](#)

## Contributions needed

*Do you have news, information, bright ideas, issues of concern that would interest and be helpful to others – maybe even advice about online talks? If you do, would you be willing to share, by sending them to Michael at [m.clarke32@optusnet.com.au](mailto:m.clarke32@optusnet.com.au) for inclusion in the next Bulletin - we would like more Australia-wide content.*

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